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# The Ferry Road

on

# Long Island

By

Eugene L. Armbruster



# THE FERRY ROAD

ON

## LONG ISLAND

BY  
EUGENE L. ARMBRUSTER

With Six Illustrations  
and Three Maps

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of which this is No. 7

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Eugene L. Armbruster

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THE FERRY ROAD

## THE INDIANS

Fulton Street and its ferry landing play the most important part in the history of Brooklyn. Two centuries passed by before Brooklyn became a city, and during that period, while there were settlements in other parts of the town, Brooklyn as a compact community, was confined to this small portion between the ferry and Red Hook Lane. Fulton Street and its ferry landing existed, however, in a primitive form, to be sure, for centuries before the first white man set foot upon Long Island soil. Tracing the history of this island road is a highly interesting study, for its beginning is Fulton Ferry and its end is Montauk Point.

Upon Manhattan Island was a certain parcel of land, cultivated by the Indians, which attracted the attention of Governor Wouter Van Twiller, this connoisseur of good lands, in the early days. The Indians called it Sappohanican and upon it Greenwich Village was built in later times. The North River was its western boundary and its eastern line was formed by a creek, coming from the upper part of the island and running into the North River; this creek was called Bestevaer Killetje. At the same point another creek flowed into the river coming from the chain of swamps and ponds, which were connected with each other by streams of water, and stretched across the island from west to east. One of these ponds was the famous Fresh Water Pond, or Collect. From the Collect a creek flowed into the East River near the Bestevaer Swamp, known as the Old Wreck Brook or the Old Kil. Thus the Bestevaer Killetje and the Old Kil formed one continuous waterway and cut Manhattan Island into two islands. The various bands of the Big Bird and Big Animal tribes living in Westchester County and on the New Jersey shore, used this water route on visiting their fellow tribesmen which dwelt upon Long Island. Hence the names Bestevaer Killetje and Bestevaer Swamp, *i. e.*, old men's or wise men's creek resp. swamp. The old men or wise men of these bands journeyed over this creek and past this swamp to the council place, which was upon the Green Hills, the ridge which

forms the beginning of the so-called backbone of Long Island. This council place was called Bestevaer for the same reason for which these names were applied to the creek and swamp, and that vicinity is still known as Bedford, the anglicized form of the Indian name. Having reached the mouth of the Old Kil, the canoes of the Indians entered upon the East River, which they crossed, and the landing was made in a cove at a point which is to-day known as Fulton Ferry, Brooklyn. From this cove an Indian trail led to the council place, at a point where the lands of the Big Bird and Big Animal tribes joined. Another branch led to the main village of the Canarsee Indians on Jamaica Bay, called Keshkechqueren. The Canarsee, coming from the bay, reached the council place by way of a creek, which was also known as Bestevaer Kil, and in later days, under the English rule, as Bedford Creek. Having used the creek as far as it was possible for the canoes, the journey was continued upon an Indian trail leading to the council place. Near the latter was a depression in the hills and the trail met here the one coming from the landing place. The aborigines crossed the river from the mouth of the Old Kil in a straight line and landed in the cove on the Long Island shore. The Dutch made their ferry landings at the identical places. The one on Manhattan Island was at what is now Pearl Street, in back of Peck Slip. Bestevaer Swamp, later known as Beekman's Swamp, was here; the Dutch called it Bestevaer Kreupelbosch. The swamp was covered with bushes and such vegetation as is generally found on swampy grounds, the tides of the river covered the tract at times as far as beyond present Gold Street, and that section is to this day known as the Swamp.

## BRUIJKLEEN COLONIE

When the Dutch West India Company started to colonize New Netherland, large tracts of land, generally called manors, were granted to rich merchants of the Netherlands, who were among the directors of the company. These manors, excepting one, Rensselaerwijck, had proven failures, as the patroons found it impossible to secure a sufficient number of men who were



willing to ship to the new country and cultivate the wild lands for them. The West India Company then started upon a new policy. Willem Kieft was appointed governor; he bought land across the East River of the Indians and began a new colony on the site of present Brooklyn. The land was granted in smaller parcels to the colonists, who became the owners of these pieces of land, which they cultivated. This new experiment was started in 1638. After a few years the colonists became more numerous and a rowboat ferry was established, one Cornelis Dircksen being the ferryman. The Company erected a tavern, called the Stad-herberg, on the Manhattan Island shore, where the Long Island colonists found shelter for the night, being brought over to Long Island in the morning and back to Manhattan Island at nightfall by this ferryman, until they had cleared their lands and were able to erect dwellings upon their plantations. This colony was called Bruijkleen Colonie, which means colony of freeholders, bruijkleen being the Dutch word for free loan. The Indian trail passed through Maereckkaakwick, a village of a Big Bird band. Above the Indian village the trail forked, one branch leading to Keshkechqueren, the other to the council place. The trail continued along the base of the Green Hills, on the north side, as far as the New Lotts of Bushwick, where it crossed over the hills. That part of the trail leading over the hills here has become famous as the Rockaway foot-path through an incident connected with the Battle of Long Island. The trail hence led to Rechouwhacky, another village of the Canarsee band, situated on Rockaway Bay, and passed the village of a conquered band which dwelt within the Canarsee territory and was known as Chameken (at present Jamaica). The trail ran further to the land of the Marsapeague band, which latter was after a few years joined by their fellow tribesmen, the Maereckkaakwick Indians, who had in the meantime sold their lands in Kings County to the white men and who became known in their new abode as Merric or Merricoke band.

The Indian trail running through the Bruijkleen Colonie was within a comparatively short time widened into a wagon road and became known as the Ferry Road. A settlement sprang up at the landing place which became known as Bruijkleen Veer or

Bruijkleen Ferry. Another settlement was started in 1645 on the site of the former Indian village Maereckkaakwick, which was named Breukelen in honor of an old Dutch town. A third settlement was made along the trail leading to the bay; this was called Middelvond, Midwond or Flatbush. A fourth one, on the same trail, was called Amersfoort (now Flatlands). Settlements were also made on the other branch of the trail, as Bedford, Jamaica, etc.

Nieuw Amsterdam having been made a city in 1653, in the following year took over the ferry from Cornelis Direksen, as a valuable asset and rented out the ferry privilege. Egbert Van Borsum, being the ferryman in 1656, erected the first ferry house on the Long Island shore, which was also used as a tavern. The Stad-herberg, having been given by the West India Company to the municipality of Nieuw Amsterdam for the use as a town hall, became known as the Stadhuijs. It was, however, in part still used as a tavern to accommodate visitors from Long Island. The Corporation sold this building, which was



THE CORPORATION HOUSE

built of Holland brick, in 1699 to one John Rodman, reserving the bell, the Kings Arms and the iron parts, belonging to the prison, for the new City Hall, which was in the same year erected on upper Wall Street on the site now occupied by the Sub-Treasury. On the balcony of this building George Washington was inaugurated the first president of the United States. The City Hall was not to be used as a tavern in future, and a building for that purpose was erected at the Long Island side of the river. In 1664 the city had become known as New York under the English rule and thus the Corporation of New York had bought in 1694 a piece of land at the Long Island ferry landing and built in 1699-1700 a tavern of brickstone, a new ferry house and a landing bridge and constructed a well at an aggregate cost of £435. This tavern was destroyed by fire in 1747 or '48; a new two-story tavern, sixty feet square, was erected in 1749, which became known as the Corporation House; this, too, was consumed by fire in 1812 and its ruins were taken down in 1817.

#### THE KINGS HIGHWAY

In 1704 Governor Cornbury appointed a commission, which laid out the Kings Highway. The latter was built along the two lines of the Ferry Road, one leading to Jamaica, and the other to Flatbush and Flatlands. There were also a number of branch-roads established, which all were included under the appellation of the Kings Highway. These were: Red Hook Lane, leading to the Red Hook; Gowanus Lane, running along the line of present Fifth Avenue to Gowanus Cove; the Big Lane, or Church Lane, running from the Flatbush branch to Flatlands Neck; the Little Lane, or Lott's Lane, running from the Flatbush branch to Canarsie; the Clove Road, leading from Bedford Corners to the salt meadows and to Flatbush Village; the Cripplebush Lane, running from Bedford Corners to the Cripplebush settlement; the Old Bushwick Road, running from the Jamaica branch to the Bushwick Road. At the point where the Old Bushwick Road branched off the Kings Highway the latter ran through a depression in the hills, *i. e.*, between two

hills. This is what the British termed the Jamaica Pass in 1776. The Indian trail had skirted the easterly side of the easternmost of the two hills and was called the Rockaway footpath. At about present Reid Avenue, where the Four Mile House later stood, the Kings Highway struck the Hunterfly Road. The two main lines were both known as the Ferry Road, from the ferry to Jamaica, as well as through Flatbush to Flatlands Village. Within the later Brooklyn village limits the road was known as Ferry Road until a branch road had been established along present line of Main Street in 1795; then there was an Old Ferry Road and a New Ferry Road. In 1817 the Old Ferry Road was renamed Fulton Street, in honor of Robert Fulton, and the name was applied to the road within the village limits. Outside these limits the road became Fulton Avenue when Brooklyn city came into existence. The popular name was, however, the Jamaica Turnpike; the story of the turnpike road will be found elsewhere. In the early 40's the road became known as the Jamaica and Brooklyn Plank Road above the Four Mile House, and South Country Road it was beyond Jamaica. The branch leading to Flatbush became known in 1809 as the Brooklyn and Flatbush Turnpike Road; in 1855, within the limits of Flatbush and Flatlands as the Brooklyn and Flatbush Plank Road, and in 1856, within the Brooklyn town limits, as Flatbush Avenue.

The mail stages from New York to Philadelphia were running in 1730 once a fortnight during the winter months. The trip, starting from the Crown and Thistle Tavern, near the Half Moon Battery and Whitehall, down the bay, was made upon specially constructed boats; then Staten Island and Achter Kil had to be crossed. Arriving at the "Blazing Star" the road was taken to New Brunswick, where the Raritan River was crossed in a scow; at Trenton the Delaware was crossed in the same way; a third river was crossed on a floating bridge of planks, and Philadelphia was reached on the third or fourth day. In 1741 Brooklyn Ferry was made a relay station for the mail coach connecting His British Majesty's Colonies of New England and Virginia, and for a few short years the Kings Highway experienced all the life connected with the Royal Mail Service.

Passengers were ferried over from New York, the mail coach with six, eight or more horses was escorted by a number of soldiers on horseback and the journey was begun along the highway to Flatbush, Gravesend and Denyse's Ferry (later Fort Hamilton). Here the stage coach was set over the Narrows to Staten Island, the run was continued across the island and by ferry to Perth Amboy; thence to Burlington, Philadelphia, etc. After a few years this route was superseded by a more direct line. In 1753 John Lane informs the public that he now keeps the ferry at Yellow Hook on Long Island, six miles below New York Ferry, and that he has provided good boats, well fitted with proper hands and will be ready at all times, wind and weather permitting, to go to Smith's Ferry on Staten Island "with a single man only" (*i. e.*, with one passenger, if need be). He advises travellers to observe, from Flatbush to Sand Ferry, to keep the marked trees on the right hand. Connection could be made with the mail coach by this ferry, but the glory of the Royal Mail Service had departed from the Kings Highway, and the redcoats galloping along were now only a memory, which furnished the material for the conversation carried on around the firesides of many a farm house during the long winter evenings, when the howling wind tried its best to unroof the old homestead which had witnessed all these things in its younger days. The clumsy farmer wagon was now supreme upon the Kings Highway until in 1772 a stage coach route was established from Brooklyn Ferry to Sag Harbor, the stage coach running once a week, and then came the Flushing coach. The stage coaches brought new life upon the highway; there was no military splendor connected with them, but their appearance was an event in the quiet life of the farmhouse dwellers along the road. The Flushing stage coach began to run in 1801, and with various changes continued until 1854, when the opening of the Flushing and North Shore Railroad put an end to its usefulness.

The various branches of the Kings Highway were the theatre upon which the Battle of Long Island was enacted on that fateful morning of August 27th, 1776, and the skirmishes which preceded that struggle. Cornwallis, who held Flatbush village,

was relieved by De Heister and the latter advanced now against the American lines of outer defences which were near the village across the Ferry Road and its vicinity and were commanded by Gen. Sullivan, Col. Miles and Col. Parsons. Sir Henry Clinton, Lords Percy, Cornwallis and Howe had moved towards New Lotts and taken possession of the Rockaway Path, and the entire force of the right wing of the British army marched now along the Kings Highway toward Bedford, and spread its line all along down to the junction of the Jamaica and Flatbush roads. The left wing and centre of the army advanced under General Grant along the Shore Road and Martense Lane towards Brooklyn. De Heister opened the cannonade from Flatbush village early in the morning and took the redoubt at Valley Grove. The Americans were driven back. A British force under Clinton and Cornwallis now cut through the American lines at the Clove Road commanded by Col. Miles. The two sections of the Americans became entangled during the retreat along the Port Road, which lead to Gowanus. They were exposed to the fire of the enemy's cannon, which were set up along the Jamaica Road, paralleling their line of retreat. The slaughter lasted from 9 o'clock until noon; Gen. Sullivan was taken prisoner. Gen. Stirling had occupied a position upon the Gowanus Road at Gowanus Bay. Being informed of the enemy's advance, he marched toward the Port Road. With him were the Delaware Battalion, the Maryland Regiment, the Connecticut Regiment and Col. Parsons forces; they were also joined by Col. Atlee's Pennsylvania Regiment, which had fallen back before Gen. Grant's forces. Stirling took position near Greenwood. The British coming from the woods, the struggle began. Col. Atlee and his corps were captured. Stirling went to attack Cornwallis, who occupied the Cortelyou house. The Marylanders attacked that building three times, but in vain. Some escaped across the Gowanus marsh. Stirling surrendered to De Heister. The American casualties were 2,500 in killed, wounded and prisoners. On the 29th the remainder of the American forces crossed the river to Manhattan Island. The embarkation was made at Brooklyn Ferry, Gen. McDougall superintending the movement. On the morning of the 30th the evacuation of the

island was completed and the British remained in full possession of the island until hostilities ceased.

### THE BROOKLYN, JAMAICA AND FLATBUSH TURNPIKE ROAD

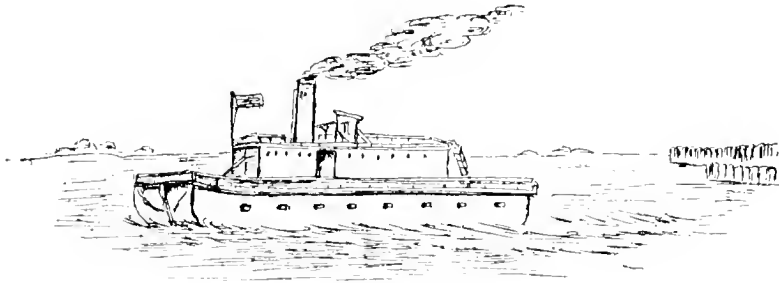
The Brooklyn, Jamaica and Flatbush Turnpike Company was incorporated on March 17th, 1809, and laid its turnpike upon the two main branches of the Kings Highway. Both were old Dutch roads, having originally been constructed by the Dutch authorities along the Indian trails. The company abandoned in 1827 that portion of its road which lay within the village limits, viz., below Red Hook Lane. This consisted of the two branches leading to the Old Ferry and the New Ferry and became now public highways of the village of Brooklyn. As late as 1840 all public highways were dirt roads; the first exception was the Jamaica and Brooklyn Plank Road, of which, however, only a small fraction was within the city limits. The Ferry Road forked at a point which is now the centre of the area bounded by Atlantic Avenue, Pacific Street, Fifth and Sixth Avenues. One arm of the turnpike road led to Jamaica and was later extended to Hempstead, 21 miles from the ferry, and still later to Babylon, 39 miles in all, by other companies. The other branch led through present Prospect Park, over Flatbush Hill, through the Valley Grove into and through the town of Flatbush, on to Flatlands, where it ended on what is still known as Kings Highway. A stage line, running to Flatbush, was established in 1830, and the Turnpike Company commenced running stages to Jamaica in 1832.

### THE FERRIES

Several changes were made in the ferry landings in course of the years. Orders were given in 1707 that the boats should make the landings on the New York shore on Mondays and Thursdays at Comtess Key, *i. e.*, on foot of Maiden Lane, where the Fly Market had just been erected; Tuesdays and Fridays at the Burgher's Path, *i. e.*, at Hanover Square; Wednes-

days and Saturdays at Coentis Slip. In 1717 two ferries were provided to run from the old Long Island landing, viz., the Nassau Ferry, carrying cattle, goods and passengers to the above mentioned three New York slips, and the New York Ferry, carrying only goods and passengers to Hanover Square and Coentis Slip. In 1774 three ferries were established with landings in New York at Coentis Slip, Fly Market and Peck Slip. On the Long Island shore were two landings provided, the one at the original landing place and another at the Red Mills, at the foot of later Atlantic Street. In 1795 the New Ferry was established, running between the Olympia settlement, now Main Street, Brooklyn, and Catherine Street, New York City. In 1803 the Old Ferry, or Fly Market Ferry, and the New Ferry, or Catherine Street Ferry, were the only two ferries running. The Old Ferry operated then two kinds of boats; the barges, rowed by four men each and holding eight or ten persons, and the sailboats, with deep bottoms. These had no regular steersman and the first passenger to arrive took the helm; horses and wagons were in the bottom of the sailboat, exposed to all kinds of weather, like the passengers. Then came the horse boats, which were propelled by continually driving two or four horses around a pole in the hold of the boat. The horses were attached to this pole and the latter was connected by a gear movement which rotated the paddle wheels.

The Old Ferry lease expiring in 1813, Robert Fulton and



*Ferry Boat Nassau*



William Cutting obtained a franchise for a ferry to begin to run in 1814 from Old Ferry Street, Brooklyn, to Fly Market and Burling Slips, New York. The slip for the steamboat was constructed at Beekman's Slip, next to Burling's Slip, and the old landing at Fly Market was abandoned. The boats of Fulton were twin boats, having two complete hulls, connected by a bridge and shaped on both ends alike, so that they could cross and recross the river without turning around, like the ferry-boats of to-day. The first steamboat on this ferry was the Nassau, also called Sall, which began running on May 10th, 1814. This boat carried as many as 550 passengers, besides a few wagons, on one trip. On account of the yellow fever in 1822, business activities of New York had been transferred to Greenwich Village, and the Nassau plied then between Brooklyn and Greenwich. Besides the Nassau, were built in 1814 the Long Island Star, and the Decatur; the latter was built as a horseboat but was altered into a steamboat. Robert Fulton died on February 23rd, 1815. Among the later boats which were running on this ferry at one time or another, we mention the William Cutting, built in 1827; the Olive Branch, in 1836; this was the first single keel boat and carried passengers only; it was the favorite boat. The Relief, built in 1837, was exchanged, together with the Long Island Star, for the Over and the Rough and Ready, built for the Jackson Ferry Company; the Suffolk, 1841; Union, 1844; Montauk, 1846; Wyandank, 1847; Transit, 1847; Bedford, 1848; Manhattan, 1849; Whitehall, 1850; Gowanus, 1851; Fulton, 1852; Brooklyn, 1853; Nassau, 1853; Atlantic, 1854; Peconic, Roslyn and Manhasset, 1860; Hamilton, Union and America, 1862; New York, Baltic and Republic, 1863. The Clinton and Somerset were built by the United States Government during the War in 1865; the Monticello and Columbia were built in 1867; the Mincola in 1868; Winona, 1869, and the iron-constructed Fulton and Farragut in 1871. The Fulton Ferryhouse in Brooklyn was improved in 1865 and was replaced by a new building in 1871 costing \$138,000; a niche had been prepared on the outer part of the structure in which a statue of Robert Fulton was installed in 1873. The statue is 10 feet 6 inches high; the inventor is leaning on the model of

the Nassau. The material used is zinc, and the casting was done in Seeley's foundry in Matjer Street; the statue was painted white. The model was made by an artist of the name of Buberl from the only known picture of Fulton, made by Jarvis, and owned by Cadwallader Colden, Fulton's biographer. Mrs. Colden later gave it to Dr. Vinton.

### BROOKLYN VILLAGE

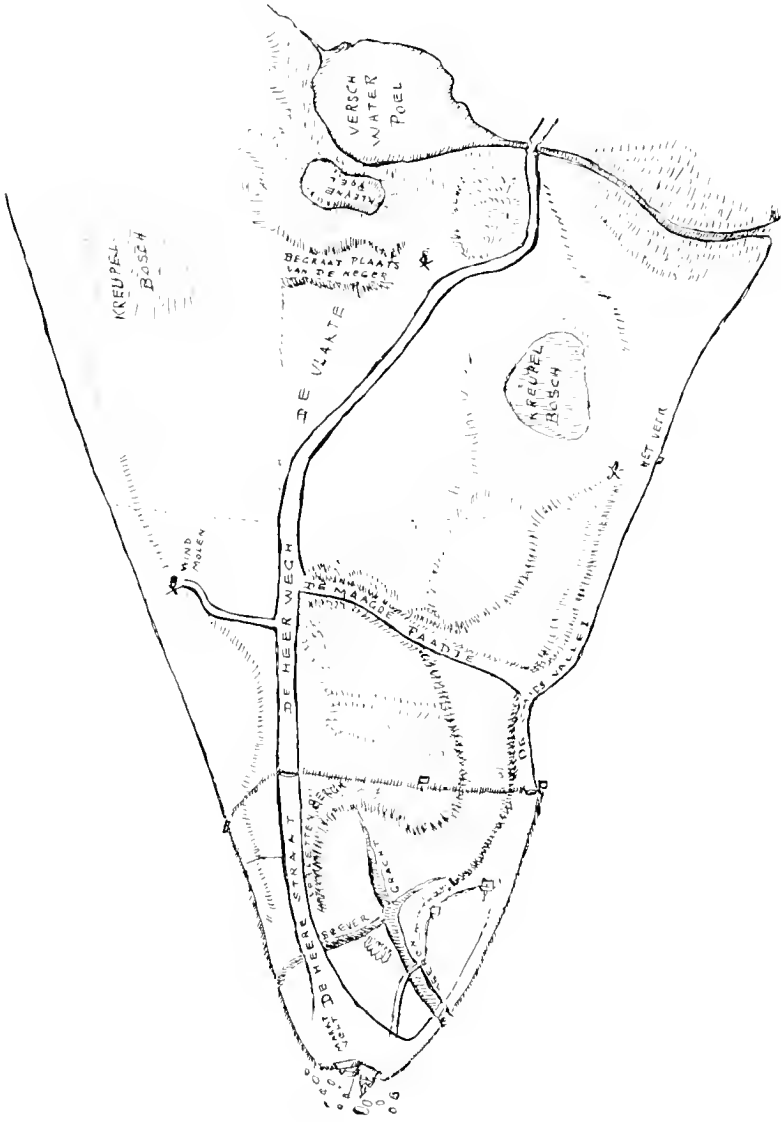
At the close of the Revolutionary War there were fifty-six buildings within the boundaries of the later village. A Fire District was formed in 1801, including the area lying between the Ferry, the Ferry Road, Red Hook Lane, District Street (later Atlantic Street), and the East River to the Ferry again. In 1816 Brooklyn Village was incorporated, embracing the area of the former Fire District. The farm lands near the Ferry Road within the village limits were then the Ludlow and the Hicks farms, between the shore and Hicks Street; the Middagh farm, bounded by Hicks and Waring Street; the Swartcope farm, extending to Pierrepont Street; the Pierrepont and the Remsen lands, extending to Joralemon Street, and the Joralemon lands, beyond that street. Just south of the Hicks farm lay Samuel Jackson's land, called Clover Hill. The beach road later became known as Furman Street. Sign posts were erected along Fulton Street to the village limits in 1818. A gravel sidewalk was laid, curbstones were set up, and the houses were numbered in 1822 within the same limits along this street. A stone walk was made from the ferry gate to Water Street, where the Steamboat Hotel stood, near the easterly corner, in 1825. Street lamps were proposed to be erected in 1828, at an estimated cost of \$14.31 a lamp per annum. The street was widened in 1835 from Front Street to Water Street by the demolition of the buildings on the easterly side, known as the democratic side, the opposite side being the aristocratic side. On September 9th, 1848, a destructive fire started in the store of George Drew at 122 Fulton Street, nearly opposite Sands Street. The houses on both sides of the street, from Poplar to Pineapple Street, were laid in ashes, the fire raging from Henry to Washington

Streets. The building line was now set back on both sides in the devastated section, thus widening the street here also. The fire destroyed four church edifices, the First Presbyterian, on Fulton Street; the Universalist, corner Fulton and Pineapple Street; the Baptist, on Nassau, and the Sands Street Methodist Episcopal Church.

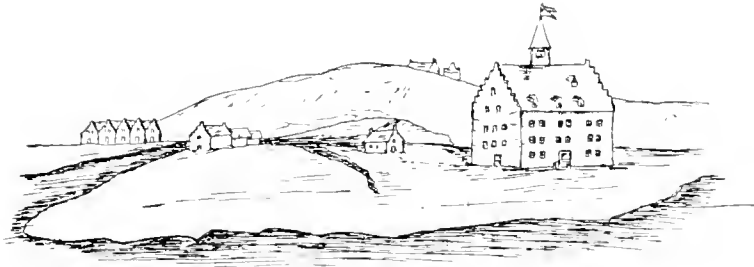
### THE ROAD TO THE FERRY ON MANHATTAN ISLAND

We have followed the development of the Ferry Road on Long Island; there was, however, another road on Manhattan Island, which virtually was a part of the Ferry Road, the ferryman's boat being the connecting link between the two roads. Nieuw Amsterdam could in the early days of its existence boast of two highways; one on the eastern shore, running from the fort to the ferry; the second, running near the western shore, led from the fort to the upper part of the island. The ferry stairs were near what is to-day known as Pearl and Ferry Streets; nearby were the ferryman's farmhouse and inn under one roof. At Skipper Louw's Point, named probably for Skipper Laurens Cornelissen Van der Wel, on the right, stood a watermill at the mouth of the Old Kil. This creek came down from the Collect through Wolphert's Meadow and was crossed by a bridge at present Park Row. A record of 1695 mentions a bridge over the Fresh Water, made at a cost of £1 16s. In back of the landing or passage place was the Bestevaer Kreupelbosch, later known as Beekman's Swamp, which became the property of Jacobus Roosevelt in 1732, who paid to the city £300 for a quitclaim. The road led from the neck of land at the swamp, alongside the present line of Pearl Street; on the one side was the beach, on the other was a bluff, to Burgher's Pad. Thence along Hoogh Straet to the Heere Gracht, which was an inlet from the river, where Broad Street is to-day. The gracht was crossed by a bridge and the road continued through Brugh Straet (now Bridge Street) to the fort. The large warehouse of Isaac Allerton stood upon the road, near Beekman Street. Several of the wealthier inhabitants, men in the employ

LOWER MANHATTAN ISLAND

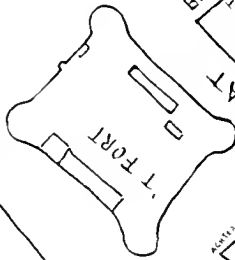


of the West India Company, erected their country residences upon the bluff along the road. Among these was Cornelius Van Tienhoven, who built his house upon the Gouwenberg, a name applied to one part of the bluff. A steep lane led up to the house, from the road, along the present line of John Street. The name Gouwenberg evidently originated from the abundance, upon this elevation, of a plant called Gouw, *i. e.*, Celandine, swallow-wort, horned or prickly poppy. The anglicized name, Golden Hill, was later applied to part of John Street. The Van Tienhoven house, then owned by one Van der Cliff, became a public resort. At Maiden Lane stood the blacksmith shop of Cornelius Clopper. He monopolized the blacksmithing business of the Long Island farmers, who could not enter the



DE STAD - HERBERG

City Gate without passing his door. While the horses were being shod, or the wheel tires repaired, the farmers partook of refreshments at his house. The vicinity was named de Smid's vallei, for his shop. This name was anglicized into Smith's Fly, hence the name Fly Market. The Stad-Herberg stood on the line of Coentis Slip, its site now being known as 71-73 Pearl Street. Jacobus Van Cortlandt constructed Coentis Slip in 1696. Alongside the slip stood the house of Daniel Rapalye, a dry goods merchant; it was erected in 1697. Upon an eminence north of Wall Street stood Jan Vinje's windmill. At present Wall Street was the City Gate or Water Gate, which is shown upon the map of 1661 as quite an imposing structure, while the land gate, upon the western road, at present Wall Street and



Broadway, is much plainer. At that time the Ferry Road was the main entrance to the city, as the greater part of strangers and countrymen, visiting the city, came from Long Island.

While the Road to the Ferry, alias "the road," had been running along the river shore in the earlier days, gradually three more streets were constructed on what was formerly land under water. Water Street was laid out about 1693. The city agreed to build a slip twenty-four feet wide on both sides of Maiden Slip, after Water Street would have been finished. The name Water Street was applied in 1736. After a while Front Street was built. South Street was constructed in certain places in 1750. Water Street was paved in 1752, and was now in a fit condition to relieve the old Ferry Road of the traffic which had been upon it since the ferry had been established, a century back. The entire road and its environments were now to be transformed. The city having built the slip on Maiden Lane, the landing place was transferred to this new slip, and the ferry stairs led up to the Fly Market, which had been built in 1706. The bluff above the road was now, in 1750, dug down and a street established, which was known as Queen Street, and is now a part of Pearl Street. Ferry Street had in course of time developed from a foot path, running across the Bestevaer Kreupelbosch, into a wagon road, and was in 1749 ceded to the city. On South Street, at the foot of Ferry Street, Peck's Slip was constructed in 1755 by Benjamin Peck, a merchant. Beekman Street was laid out and paved in 1750, William Beekman having purchased in 1670 land here, which had been granted in 1642 to Philip de Truy. William Walton built in 1753 his palatial house on Queen Street, which existed, though altered, until 1881. For years the section near the East River shore remained fashionable. George Washington's residence, at the time of his inauguration, was one block north of Peck Slip, near the head of Dover Street, at the junction of Pearl and Cherry Streets. This building was later the residence of Walter Franklin, a Quaker and wealthy merchant. Governor DeWitt Clinton, Franklin's son-in-law, subsequently resided here. In the 30's of the 19th century, this house was a part of the famous hotel called the Bunker Mansion House.

Twenty years later the lower parts had been converted into shops. In the rear, on Pearl Street, was the Quaker Meeting-house, the Quakers, for the greater part, residing in this neighborhood, between Chatham Street and Maiden Lane. John Jacob Astor's house was two doors from the Quaker Meeting-house, at then 81 Queen Street. Many of the members of the First Congress, which opened in 1789, resided on present Pearl Street. Catherine Street was in 1803 still an unpaved lane with hills on either side. The Fly Market consisted then of three market buildings between Pearl Street and the river, streets dividing them; two were meat markets; the third, nearest the shore, was called the country market. Every afternoon the farmers came over from Long Island in rowboats with their produce, and every morning the marketmen and women were here with their full baskets. The Catherine Street market consisted then of two market buildings.

#### BROOKLYN FERRY AND THE OLD FERRY ROAD

At the beginning of the 19th Century Brooklyn Ferry was a cluster of taverns, livery stables and stores. People visiting any part of the island were brought to this point by the boats from New York City. They found good horses in the stables if they desired to make the journey on horseback. Stage coaches leaving for any point on the island started from here. Coaches could be hired for private use, and before the start was made a good meal could be had at a reasonable price. A drygoods store, hardware store, stationery and book store were here; this was the shopping center for the majority of Long Island folks. In the first three decades of the new century the settlement, though steadily progressing, did not materially change in appearance. The '30s, however, brought numerous stage lines, which ran to the county towns and other places, and eventually stages left the ferry at almost any hour during the day. At Brooklyn Ferry travellers were spending several hours before starting upon a journey, and any place where people assemble in such manner is bound to grow so rapidly that comparatively nearby sections cannot keep pace with it. Thus when Brooklyn was



made a city in 1834 Brooklyn Ferry was the city, while the remainder of the large former town was still a farming district.

Going up the Ferry Road we will point out a few of the most noteworthy buildings and other objects of interest which we pass. Perhaps fifty feet distant from the ferry gate we come upon the Liberty pole, the original site being occupied by a pole set up on July 4th, 1822. On the right hand side John Bedell's stage house and grocery, a two-story framehouse, with the livery stables, occupied the site of the old cattle enclosure, where the cattle, brought to the ferry from all parts of the island for the New York market, used to await transportation across the river. On Elizabeth Street stood the old stone tavern, to which Benjamin Smith removed after the Corporation House was destroyed by fire in 1812. It was a two-story structure, fifty feet wide, and known in later days as Smith and Wood's Tavern or the Long Island Stage House. The New York newspapers were left here by the ferryman, to be called for by the subscribers. At Aert Street, now Henry Street, stood the two-story Middagh framehouse, with its gable end to the street, until 1868. In the days of the Revolution the waters of the East River would have splashed against the curbstones on Front Street, at high tide, had they been then in their place. The space between the ferry gate and the site of the Corporation House was now filled in and built upon. This shows that the original ferry landing was a miniature cove; the road and the land on the right side of the road extended out into the river a good deal further than the land on the left side. The boat was here protected against the waves while loading and unloading. On the left side, at Water Street, stood Captain King's Tavern, subsequently known as Barnum's, the Steamboat Hotel and finally the Franklin House. Further up was the site of the Corporation House. On Mill Road, later Front Street, stood the John Rapalye house, two stories high and built of Holland brick, until 1807. Between the Corporation House and the Rapalye House stood the first engine house, erected upon a gore-lot at the end of the 18th century. The fire bell, purchased by the village of the Dutch church in 1822, was installed upon the roof of the Remsen house, on the site of the Rapalye house. Across Front Street

stood a very old frame building, in which the first post-office was located in 1818. Another very old building, one and a half stories high and built of small yellow Holland brick, was nearby; this is believed to have been the original John Rapalye homestead; the British held divine services in here occasionally. Thomas Kirk's printing office was in 1790 at the corner of Front Street; he printed the first number of the *Courier of New York and Long Island Advocate* on June 26th, 1799. Also on corner of Front Street were Robinson & Little, who printed the first number of the *Long Island Weekly Intelligencer* on May 26th, 1806. Further up is an old yellow frame building with seats on both sides of the front door, the house of John Doughty, who held during his long life nearly all, if not all, offices connected with the village and town. Then we notice a house which is believed to have been built by Rem Jansen Van der Beeck, the ancestor of the Remsen family. It was the home of Jacob Patchen when it was removed to Jackson Street, to give space for the opening of Market Street in 1834. The Hicks homestead, a two-story stone house, stood at Hicks Street. The entrance to the wagon yard of the British army was near Main Street.

#### THE NEW FERRY AND NEW FERRY ROAD

Having followed the Old Ferry Road to this point, we must retrace our steps toward the river front and go to the New Ferry. The Ferry Road had shortly before the close of the 18th century been provided with a second ferry landing and with a short lane, which, after crossing a few streets, connected with the road. The lands of John Rapalye, lying between the Brooklyn Ferry and the Wallabout Bay, having been confiscated, were sold in 1784 to the Sands brothers, who laid them out in streets four years later. The proprietors applied the name *Olympia* to their place, which was expected to be the coming city on account of its superior situation. A ferry was established in 1795 and with it a street from the ferry landing to a point in the Ferry Road, where the latter makes a sharp curve, so that the Ferry Road and the new street together

formed an almost straight line. This landing place became known as New Ferry and finally as Catherine Ferry and the street as New Ferry Road and later as Main Street, while the other branch of the road was now known as Old Ferry Road. The New Ferry was also called the Teamboat Ferry and the Old Ferry was called Steamboat Ferry. There were no buildings of special interest along this street and we can go further along the Ferry Road.

### FULTON STREET

From the junction point of the Old and New Ferry Roads to Red Hook Lane the Ferry Road was known as Fulton Street. The Apprentices' Library was built in 1824-25 on the south-westerly corner of Henry and Cranberry Streets, about 100 feet from Fulton Street. The city purchased the building in 1836 for the sum of 11,000 dollars; there was a small building attached. Together they were known as the City Buildings and were used for the courts and for public meetings. In 1858 the City Buildings were taken down and the City Armory was erected on the site at a cost of 14,300 dollars. A one and one-half story structure, built of small Holland brick, stood near the corner of Nassau Street, fifteen feet above the level of the road. It was occupied by the Colonial Legislature as Sessions House during the prevalence of the smallpox in New York City in 1746 and again in 1752. It was also the headquarters of General Israel Putnam in 1776, prior to the Battle of Long Island. The building was part of the confiscated Rapalje estate. The ground for the City Hall, an open field of one and one-half acres in extent, was purchased for the sum of 52,909 dollars. The cornerstone was laid on April 28, 1836; a quantity of valuable books and papers having been enclosed in the stone. The financial panic of 1837 halted the erection of the building for an indefinite period. In 1845 the walls, as far as they had been put up, were demolished and in March, 1846, a new, smaller building was started. Whether the original cornerstone was used again or taken out, or else remained in its old place, seems to be not known. The sum expended for the

ground and first operations was 193,254 dollars; for removal of old walls and erection of structure and furnishing, 521,746 dollars; total, 715,000 dollars. When Henry Clay visited Brooklyn in 1839 he addressed the people in a field near the City Hall site. A cornfield was on what is now Montague Street. Court Street was not cut through then. Joralemon's Lane, now Joralemon Street, was a little-used country lane laid out in 1762, 32 feet wide; forty years later its width was increased to 50 feet. A Liberty pole was erected at the junction of Fulton Street and Joralemon's Lane on Evacuation Day in 1834. Military Garden was opened in 1810 by Col. Greene on the right side of the road and along Joralemon's Lane. In back of it was the Potter's Field. The garden was later known as Brooklyn Garden and existed until about 1860. On its site the Kings County Court House was erected, 1862-65, the ground, then owned by John Schenck, being purchased for the sum of 70,000 dollars. The Municipal Building, adjoining, was erected at a cost of 199,979 dollars 48 cents. It was completed in 1878 and taken down in 1915. The Hall of Records was built on the other side of the Court House in 1885-86 at a cost of 275,000 dollars. Red Hook Lane was in the village days the most important thoroughfare next to the Ferry Road; it separated the village from the Tunis Johnson Farm, which embraced nearly 100 acres of land. The lane was also the means of reaching the mills and farms of South Brooklyn. The builder, James E. Underhill, erected about 1830 his residence on this lane off Fulton Street. In 1850 this building became the headquarters of the Board of Education and was occupied by that body until 1888.

## TRAVELLING FACILITIES

In 1832 the Brooklyn and Jamaica Rail Road Company was incorporated and received a charter, for the term of fifty years, to build a steam railroad upon the Jamaica branch of the Ferry Road, as far as Jamaica, and operate same. Brooklyn, having become a city in 1834, wished to possess a highway from the Ferry to Bedford, which would not be obstructed by a steam

railroad, and laid out in 1836 the Bedford Road, running from the intersection of Bridge and Concord Streets to the Jamaica Turnpike, where the latter joined the Clove Road at Bedford Corners. In 1837 the Brooklyn and Jamaica Rail Road Company was authorized to alter its route and the straight line of present Atlantic Avenue, from Flatbush Avenue eastwards, was substituted for the crooked line of the Turnpike and the Bedford Road was abandoned. The lower portion of the Turnpike having been ceded to the village and Atlantic Street in the city being a continuation of Atlantic Avenue in a straight line, was selected for the terminus of the railroad and from its foot South Ferry connected with New York City.

Stages were running to Flatbush as early as 1830. The doors were on the side of the vehicles. Straw packed on the floor kept the passengers tolerably warm and little whale-oil lamps furnished light. Extra horses, stationed at certain points, were hitched on to help pull the stages up steep hills. Omnibusses were introduced in January, 1834; these were a new kind of stage coaches, having the doors on the rear end. They were not running over special routes, but picked up passengers, whose wishes often determined the further course of the vehicle; the fare was 12½ cents, or one shilling. There were soon many stage lines, the majority starting off from Samuel S. Jones' American Hotel at 26 Fulton Street, the site of the old stone tavern.

In 1854 horse cars began to run from Fulton Ferry, on Fulton Avenue, Court Street, Myrtle Avenue and Flushing Avenue. The first cars were former stage coaches, set on four wheels, with a king bolt in the center upon which the vehicle could be turned, while the wheels remained motionless. A steady pin in the front had to be pulled out, and after the car had been turned the pin was put back in its place.

## FULTON AVENUE

Fulton Avenue above Bridge Street was still a country road in the early 50's. There were there still two Dutch farmhouses with gable roofs and bullseyes in the doors on this avenue below present junction of Flatbush Avenue. The Breukelen graveyard

had been established along the Indian trail and a blockhouse was built in the grounds for the protection of the settlers against attacks by the Indians. The church edifice, erected in 1666, tradition says, was reared upon the foundation of this blockhouse. The Indian trail was gradually widened to a road, with the church building in its center, between present Lawrence and Bridge Streets. The burying ground was confined to the west of the edifice. The latter was built of stone and resembled the meeting house erected in 1699 at Jamaica. The churchyard



*Second Breukelen Church edifice  
erected 1706.*

comprised about one-half acre of ground and continued to be used for burial purposes until 1848. The oldest tombstone having any mark which could be distinguished, a century ago, bore the date of 1730. In 1866 the families of the old Breukelen settlers were advised to remove the remains of the bodies, as otherwise the latter would be removed to Greenwood Cemetery. Finally 78 bodies were taken out and, enclosed in 12 metallic caskets, were placed in the church vault in Greenwood Cemetery. The site of the graveyard on Fulton Avenue between Gallatin Place and Hoyt Street was sold in 1869 to A. S. Wheeler for 112,000 dollars and is now occupied by the Abraham & Straus

Department Store. The church edifice was replaced by a new structure in 1766 on the same site. The bell used in the first structure, a gift of the West India Company, received some years before the first church was built, was again put in this building, but was in 1822 sold to the village of Brooklyn for the sum of £49 4s. raised by subscription by the citizens. It has been asserted that, at the time of the Battle of Long Island, Washington held his military council here in this building. During the British occupation services of the Church of England were held here for the soldiers. The English language was introduced in the regular services in 1792. In 1807 a new edifice was dedicated on a new site, as the old church was standing in the way of a coming improvement, the Turnpike. The Brooklyn folks held on the old grim-looking edifice as long as possible, but the Turnpike was being laid, and in 1810 the structure was taken down. Furman tells us that in removing it, the workmen found the remains of an Hessian officer who had been buried there in his uniform during the Revolutionary War. The old church site then became known as Brooklyn Square. The site of the third edifice was on Joralemon's Lane and was purchased in 1805 of John Jackson for the sum of 850 dollars. This edifice was built of gray stone, with small windows and a square tower in front, surmounted by a square cupola; its cost was 13,745 dollars and 53 cents. It was dedicated on December 23rd, 1807. When this structure was taken down the stones were used in constructing the first Trinity or later St. Luke's Episcopal Church, on Clinton Avenue. The fourth edifice, on the site of the third one, was dedicated in 1835, it being 111x66 feet, and on the Grecian order. When a new site was purchased for a church building, the ground on Joralemon Street was sold in 1886 for the sum of 250,000 dollars. The Dutch church erected in 1811 a chapel on Middagh Street, which was later sold, and was occupied by P. S. No. 6. In the earlier days the Dominie used to stay at the house of the clerk of the Session between Sabbath services. Johannes de Bevoise, the town clerk of Breukelen, was also clerk of the Session for many years. The old one-story house, which stood on the left side of the road near the westerly corner of Duffield

Street, was his home. His daughter, Margaret, married Dr. John Duffield, an army surgeon, and the house became known as the Duffield house. It is believed to have been built by Carel de Bevois and was occupied by the British during the occupation of Long Island. It was destroyed by fire on April 14th, 1857. The Duffield estate extended along the left side of the road from about Bridge Street to Duffield Street. The Duffield family burial place was a little west of Gold Street on the right side of the old road; it was removed when Fulton Avenue was straightened, as it was directly on the line of the new thoroughfare. Further up the road stood on the right side a frame house, erected about the close of the 17th century by Michael Bergen. It was rebuilt in the time of the Revolution and was taken down in the early 60's. Above the Bergen house an intrenchment crossed the Ferry Road during the Revolutionary War, which extended from Fort Putnam to Frecke's Mill Pond; this part was reconstructed as an oblong redoubt during the War of 1812-14 and was then known as Fort Cummings. A tollgate was erected in 1809 near the point where the Ferry Road forked, a little south of Hanson Place. After Atlantic Avenue had been laid out the tollgate was set up at the present corner of Atlantic and Flatbush Avenues in 1842. When the Flatbush Plank Road was constructed in 1855 the tollgate was removed to a point south of the Valley Grove Tavern. After Prospect Park was established and the road was reconstructed outside the park limits, the tollgate was set up opposite the Willink estate. When that part of Flatbush, which was included in Prospect Park, was annexed by Brooklyn, the tollgate was removed within the Flatbush town limits and was standing in 1880 on Flatbush Avenue and Hawthorne Street. An old farmhouse, the Couwenhoven house, stood, shaded by large willow trees, on the west side of present Fort Greene Place, near Atlantic Avenue, facing south, with gable end to the Ferry Road, some 450 feet south of the tollgate; it was taken down in the 60's. Two hundred feet southward stood Baker's Tavern, mentioned in Onderdonck's Revolutionary Incidents. In the 40's of the 19th century this was known as the Old Bull's Head Tavern and the Long Island Rail Road trains used to stop in



front of the place; the present Long Island Rail Road Depot is said to occupy its site. Charles B. Holder erected the Three Mile House in 1854 on Fulton Avenue, near New York Avenue; this was taken down in 1913. Having left the tollgate and present Flatbush Avenue, which latter continued to Flatbush and Flatlands, the Jamaica Turnpike Road ran through fields, farms and woods to Bedford Corners. From this point the Cripplebush Road led to the Cripplebush settlement, where it struck the Newtown Road. The Clove Road ran from Bedford Corners in the opposite direction through the "Kloof" or cleft in the hills, to the salt meadows, sending out a branch which led to Flatbush Village. At Bedford Corners were a number of old houses, as the Tiebout, Selover and Vanderbeeck houses. The one on the s. w. corner of the Clove Road, probably built by Andries Andriese, in 1759, came with all the land in the possession of Jacobus Lefferts. It was surrounded by locust trees, and its roof gave shelter to Major André, General Gray, etc.; it was taken down in 1877. The Rem Rensen house was taken down about 1840. The village schoolhouse stood on the right side of the Cripplebush Road, on coming from Bedford Corners; it was a one-story frame building and became P. S. No. 3. A brewhouse stood in 1701 on the Cripplebush Road. The Johannes Rensen house is said to have been built in 1716; it was taken down in 1838. The village burying ground and the Lefferts family burial ground were in its rear on the right side of the Cripplebush Road, and the Rensen burial place on the other side of the same road. The Nicholas Bloom house was rebuilt in 1787 and was four years later purchased by Leffert Lefferts; it was taken down in 1909, being then known as 1224 Fulton Street. Then there were the Abraham Van Enden house, taken down in 1819, and the Lambert Suydam house, which stood until 1856. In 1840 the view as far as East New York was unobstructed by any building. William Simonson's Four Mile House stood at the junction of the Ferry Road and Hunterfly Road, between present Reid and Patchen Avenues. From here the Jamaica and Brooklyn Plank Road was constructed in the early 40's, the tollgate standing originally near the Four Mile House. In the 80's there were tollgates on either

side of the Plank Road on the left just below Eldert Avenue, and on the right side at Hemlock Street; the Plank Road within the old Brooklyn town limits having been ceded to the city in 1852 to be used as a public street; the Brooklyn and Jamaica Turnpike Road, likewise having been ceded three years prior. Howard's Halfway House, or the Rising Sun Tavern, stood at the junction of the Ferry Road and Old Bushwick Road, having been built by William Howard in 1715. The British forced the



HOWARD'S INN.

tavern-keeper and his little son to lead them over the Rockaway Path in the early morning hours of August 27th, 1776. Here also General Woodhull received nourishment and had his wounds dressed on his way to New Utrecht. The Howard estate was sold in 1867. A big white oak tree stood in the middle of the road, a little east of the tavern, at the time of the Revolution. It was in later time struck by lightning. The Isaac Schenck farmhouse, standing on the right side of the road between Linwood and Essex Streets, is now included in Highland Park.

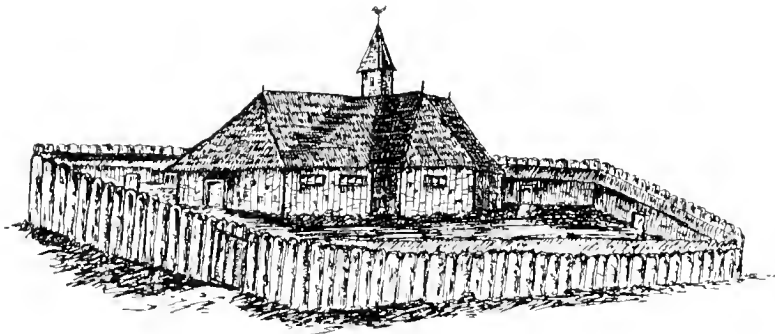
## THE FLATBUSH ROAD

Between the junction point of the Jamaica and Flatbush Roads and the Flatbush town line were only a few houses, none of which was of historical interest. Halfway up the Flatbush Hill stood a small building, and on the top, in the midst of the woods, stood another house, which had never been finished. Past these few houses the road ran through fields and woods over Flatbush Hill to the Valley Grove. The latter was so called on account of the denser shadows caused by the sandpit on the side. In the lowest part of the valley stood on the easterly side of the road, at its junction with the Port Road, the Valley Grove Tavern, also called Hicks' Port Tavern; this building was taken down when Prospect Park came into existence. The name Port was applied to the Valley, meaning the entrance to Flatbush; it was a little beyond the Three Mile Post from Brooklyn Ferry. The Port Road was a narrow, stony road, leading to Gowanus; it was also called Shippike Road, because by using this road to Red Hook Lane the farmers avoided the tollgate upon the turnpike. The tollgate stood at one time near the tavern, and until the day of the Battle of Long Island a white oak tree of immense size had stood here also, which had been one of the landmarks mentioned in Dongan's patent for the Town of Flatbush. This oak tree was cut down at that memorable day and laid across the Flatbush Road to obstruct the march of the British towards Brooklyn. From the valley the road continued over China Hill, a little bowl-shaped hill, propelling into the lower ground, so as to cover the road into Flatbush village. A battery was constructed upon it, which was supposed to hold the British in check. Prospect Park was started in 1862 and was opened to the public in 1867. In 1855 citizens of Flatbush formed the Brooklyn and Flatbush Plank Road Company and purchased of the Brooklyn, Jamaica and Flatbush Turnpike Company the latter's interest in the Flatbush Road. The City of Brooklyn now constructed present Flatbush Avenue from Fulton Avenue, Brooklyn, to the Flatbush town line, to the right of the turnpike road. In this new highway the curving lines of the old road were eliminated. After Prospect Park had been established that part of the road which ran

through the park area had, of necessity, to be altered again to exclude the highway traffic from the park. The Plank Road Company laid its plank road upon the old turnpike road through the towns of Flatbush and Flatlands and was permitted to charge toll for the use of the road from Flatbush Church to Flatlands Church. The footwalks were four feet above the roadway and were lined with big horse chestnut trees. The walks were reached from the road by inclined planks, under which the rainwater ran off. When the plank road became worn out the company hired prisoners from the authorities of the Kings County Penitentiary and macadamized the road. Flatbush Avenue was opened in 1856 from Fulton Avenue to the entrance of Flatbush village and the old turnpike road was then closed. The Plank Road proper was finished in 1858, and in 1860 the Brooklyn City Rail Road Company bought the right of way from the Plank Road Company and built a single track with a switch at Winthrop Street. The first cars ran in 1860 to the Brooklyn city limits, where they were met by the omnibus; later the horse car line was completed to the Vernon Avenue depot, and the omnibus passed into disuse. Through the town of Flatbush the road had been known as the Ferry Road in the olden days, and subsequently as Kings Highway, the Turnpike Road and the Plank Road. Dr. Strong called it in 1842 Fulton Street and the popular local name was Main Road. The same names were applied through the town of Flatlands, excepting the name Fulton Street. The popular name used within this town, however, was Flatbush Road and later Flatbush Avenue. In 1872 it was decided to straighten the old roads in the county, and in 1877 this road was straightened throughout Flatlands and was extended to Jamaica Bay. Many old houses stood along the road through Flatbush; space does not permit to notice all. Among the most noteworthy were the Lefferts house on the left side; the original structure had been erected in 1666, was burned during the Revolutionary War and was rebuilt. It bore the number 563 on Flatbush Avenue when it was removed in 1917 to Prospect Park. Across the road stood the Jeremiah Vanderbilt homestead, also burned down at the same time. The Adrian Hegeman stone house on the left side,

between Midwood Street and Rutland Road, had the same fate. On the right side of the road stood a house built in 1710, which was also destroyed; on its site J. Birdsall erected about 1800 the frame house, which is still standing with its gable end to the road, and known as the Murphy house. The Cortelyou house on left side, on corner of Hawthorne Street, was erected about 1794; it has been razed. On the right stood the Leffert Martense frame house with gable end to the road; it was another victim of the war of '76 and was rebuilt; Judge Martense took it down. On the left side, between Winthrop Street and Parkside Avenue, stood Melrose Hall, built in 1749. This building was removed in the 80's of the last century and its main portion removed to Bedford Avenue. On the Parkside Avenue corner stood in 1720 the house of John Aertsen Vanderbilt; this was a century later known as the Van Couwenhoven house and was soon thereafter razed. On the corner of Clarkson Street stood an old tavern on the site later occupied by the Neefus house. Between Clarkson Street and Lenox Road stood the Johannes Lott house, built in 1800, which was taken down. On the right side, between Clarkson and Caton Avenues, were the grounds of General Philip S. Crooke; the house was built in 1800. The Jacobus Lefferts house stood at the Cross Roads *i. e.* the Ferry Road and Church Lane, built at the end of the 17th century and rebuilt by Jacob Leffert. It became known as the Zabriskie house and was taken down in 1877. Between Caton Avenue and Church Lane stood an old house which was in 1835 removed across the road by Captain Story, who remodelled it. The Clarkson house was occupied by soldiers in the War of 1812-14; it was later taken down and re-erected in Brooklyn, where it became a part of the Mansion House on Hicks Street. On the left side of the road, at the corner of Martense Street, stood the brick house erected by Pieter Strycker in 1696, which was taken down about 1850. On Cow Lane, alias Dutchman's Lane, later East Broadway, and now part of Church Avenue, stood the Waldron house, a Dutch farmhouse of which Michael Neefus became the owner later on; a Liberty pole stood in front of the house. Next to it was the one-story stone building of the village school. The Dutch language was used here ex-

clusively until 1762, and was dropped altogether in 1777. The British used the schoolhouse as the principal hospital in the war; it was razed in 1803. During the War of 1812-14 the Federal Government erected a gun house upon the site. Erasmus Hall, adjoining the schoolhouse site, was erected in 1786-87 at a cost of 6,250 dollars. The J. Vanderveer house stood on the corner of Grant Street. Below Grant Street was the old home of the Bergen family. Then came the old house purchased in 1711 for a parsonage; it was demolished in 1891. The Jacobus Vander-venter house was erected in 1781 near Tilden Avenue; south of



*Original Long Island Church  
erected at Middelwoud*

it was a large pond. Across Tilden Avenue, formerly Vernon Avenue, was Smith Birdsall's stage house. Going back to the Cross Roads, we come on the right side of the Ferry Road, upon the site of the first Dutch church erected on Long Island. This was at the corner of the road to New Utrecht and Bath, alias Cow Lane, Church Lane, at present Church Avenue. The first edifice was erected in 1654-6, costing 4,637 guilders; this was taken down in 1698. The second edifice was erected in 1699, costing £4,873, 7.7. During the Revolutionary War it was used as hospital, prison and stable. After the battle of August 27th, 1776, the wounded prisoners were brought to this building. John Vanderbilt donated the bell in 1796. The third edifice, standing to-day, was erected in 1793-96, at a cost of

12,000 dollars. The Dutch language was used exclusively here until 1792, then the afternoon services were held in English. The last Dutch sermon was delivered in 1824. When the second building was taken down and the foundation had to be removed, it became necessary to transfer the remains of the bodies buried under the church; they were placed in ground in front of the new edifice. A frame chapel was built in 1830; it was used as consistory room and as Sunday school. The new Sunday school having been erected in 1871 on Flatbush Avenue and Grant Street, this frame structure near the church was taken down in 1881. Dr. Strong says about the parsonage: "In the first church edifice there had been accommodation for the minister and his family, but when this edifice was razed in 1698 a separate parsonage was probably built. This was the parsonage of all the Dutch towns, and subsequently Flatbush came into sole possession of the property by purchase. It was a long, low building, without any windows in the second story and with a heavy, steep roof after the pattern of the first Dutch houses. When a new parsonage was built for the Rev. Dr. Strong in 1823 on part of the old school site, the Rev. Martinus Schoonmaker continued to reside in the old stone parsonage until his death, which occurred in 1824. Later the building was taken down and a new one was erected in 1853 at this site, and a cost of 9,888 dollars and 22 cents. In the cemetery in the rear of the church and facing Church Lane, stood a one-story building intended for the temporary reception of the dead; this was used at one time as the engine house by the volunteer firemen. Kings County was created in 1683 and the County Court House was built in 1686 here south of the church; a second building was erected in 1758, costing 448 dollars; at the same time a jail was built. One of these two buildings was destroyed by fire and the site was cleared of both. The third Court House building was then erected, which was used by the Hessians as barracks. It was taken down in 1792; in the same year the fourth Court House was built at a cost of 2,944 dollars 71 cents, also stocks and a whipping post were set up. All were consumed by fire on November 30th, 1832, and the County Court was then removed to the village of Brooklyn. The town records were kept

in the Dutch language until 1776. Between the church grounds and the Court House stood a tavern and on the southern side of the Court House plot were two more taverns. The first mentioned was the inn of the Widow Schoonmaker; this building was standing until 1917. On the south side of the Court House stood the Van Beuren tavern, kept by the family of that name as early as 1760; adjoining was the tavern of Duryea Wiggins. At the corner of present Albemarle Road was Dominic Freeman's house, a two and a half story structure, erected about 1735. David Clarkson married the Dominic's daughter and the house became known as the Clarkson house during the Revolutionary War, when it was used as a hospital after the battle. In later times it was known as the John C. Bergen house, and was taken down in 1900 or 1901. On what was at one time the corner of Waverley Avenue stood a house erected before the Revolution. Dr. Schoonmaker, the son of the Dominic, owned it at one time. The Rev. Dr. Livingston lived here in 1794; it was razed. Across Waverley Avenue, which has since been closed, stood on the corner the Abraham Vanderveer stone farmhouse. At Beverley Road, with its gable end to the road, stood a house erected in 1803 by Dominic Schoonmaker of lumber taken from the old court house, which had been pulled down in 1792; it was removed in 1895 for the opening of a street. On the left side of the road, near Tilden Avenue, stood the Van Beuren homestead, later known as the Jacob Duryea house. The surrounding ground and the structure were purchased by the Brooklyn City Rail Road, which erected its horse car depot here. The Cornelius Duryea house, a large building standing on the Canarsie Lane, has been razed. At Cortelyou Road, on the right side of the Ferry Road, stood the house of Jeremiah Lott, who surveyed and mapped Brooklyn Village; it was taken down about 1893. The Suydam house was a long, low building, its second story being without windows. Andrew Suydam's daughter married John Ditmas and the house became known as the Ditmas-Suydam house; it was taken down. The Henry J. Ditmas house was built with its gable end to the road, about 1800. Further south stood the Ditmas homestead, built of stone. The Allgeo house stood at the extreme southern



end of Flatbush upon what was called the little flat, in the 18th century. On the left side of the road and opposite the Suydam house stood the Vanderveer homestead, erected in 1787 and razed in 1910. The house of Dominie Vincentius Antonides nearby, was used by the British as a hospital; it was taken down in the 70's.

We have now reached the Flatlands townline. A half century ago there were, on the left side of the Ferry Road, the J. A. Lott house; the P. D. Baun and J. C. Ryder houses on the right side. Further along on the left the J. Wyckoff house and the J. H. Van Brunt house; the A. H. Hubbard house on the right; the G. W. Baxter house on the left; the G. H. Shaffer, V. K. Stephenson and W. Brush houses all on the right side. The Van Sinderen homestead on Hubbard's Lane near the road on the left side, was built in 1746 by Dominie Ulpianus Van Sinderen. Onderdonk describes this worthy man as a lean and shriveled little man with a triangular shaped hat and silver locks, which streamed like a meteor flowing to the troubled air as he whisked along with great velocity in his chaise through Flatbush. He now sleeps peacefully in the Flatlands graveyard, his tombstone bearing this inscription: "Hier leyt het Liechaem van den Wel-Eerwaerde Heer Ulpianus Van Sinderen in zyn leeven Predicant in Kings County, Overleeden den 23 July, 1796, oud Zynde 88 Jaeren, 7 maanden en 12 daegen." We are now on the church plot, which extends from the left side of the road to the Flatlands Neck Road. The schoolhouse is on the Flatbush Road, the church on the Neck Road. The first church edifice was erected in 1663; the bell was installed in 1686; this edifice was enlarged in 1762. A second edifice was erected on this site in 1794, a third one on the same site in 1848. It was somewhat damaged by fire in 1917. A lecture room was built near the church in 1853. The first schoolhouse was not standing near the church, but about 1699 a new schoolhouse was erected, probably in an unused part of the burial ground; this one was repaired in 1792; a third one was erected in 1818, and a fourth one in 1861, which was enlarged in 1876. The first record of the school is of 1675. The burial ground includes the Indian burial plot on the northwest, the churchyard proper on

the west, the De Bann and Terhune family burial places on the southwest, the latter being both used since 1696, and the public burial ground purchased by the town of Flatlands in 1886. We have now reached what is still called the Kings Highway, being a part of the Kings Highway laid out by the Commission which Gov. Cornbury appointed in 1704. Hendrickson's Store on the corner was a place of importance for the town; the Town Council used to hold its sessions here, and the Courts were held in the cellar of this building. Flatbush Avenue having been extended to Jamaica Bay, the road passes near Avenue P within a short distance from the Jeromus Lott house. This house, built of Holland brick and painted white, was the home of Jeromus Lott, son of Col. Jeromus Lott of Revolutionary times. The first pier on Jamaica Bay, constructed in accordance with the Jamaica Bay Improvement plan, at what is, at the present day, the end of Flatbush Avenue, was opened for business on June 1st, 1918. Some day the waves of the Atlantic Ocean will dash against this extension of the old Ferry Road.

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